



News Release

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Utahns with Arthritis: Move More to Feel Better *Simple walking can lessen symptoms, reduce pain*

(Salt Lake City) – In 2009, one in every three (34.8%) Utah adults with arthritis were obese. That's a 16% increase from 29.9% in 2003. According to a report released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, obesity prevalence nationwide is 54% higher among adults with arthritis compared to adults without arthritis.

“This is an ongoing concern for us,” said Rebecca Castleton, Utah Department of Health (UDOH) Arthritis Program Coordinator. “Arthritis is the number one cause of disability in Utah and physical activity is an essential way to manage symptoms and maintain a healthy weight.”

Although exercise and lifestyle self-management are essential to reducing the health impact of arthritis, losing weight can be a complex battle due to joint pain and stiffness that can limit physical activity.

“People with arthritis may have a more difficult time losing weight and exercising, but those are the two best things they can do to improve their symptoms,” said Castleton.

Simple walking can reduce pain, improve function, and promote weight loss. A loss of just 10-12 pounds can make a big difference in quality of life and postpone further disability. Combined, they can reduce the number of knee replacements and help people with arthritis live longer.

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For more information, or to learn more about exercise and other arthritis classes in your area, visit www.health.utah.gov/arthritis or call 801-538-9458. Or contact the Arthritis Foundation at 1-800-444-4993 or <http://www.arthritis.org/chapters/utah/>.

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